

# Carter Addresses OAS, Stresses Human Rights

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President Carter, in his first major statement of policy toward Latin America, yesterday pledged support for nations that respect human rights and announced that he will seek Senate ratification of a broad and detailed inter-American treaty on human rights.

Speaking to diplomats and policy-makers at a meeting of the Organization of American States, Carter made no mention of the foreign aid cuts or public criticisms on human rights grounds that have caused friction with some military-run Latin American governments in the first months of his administration. However, he gave no sign of backing off from his stand, saying that U.S. concern for individual freedoms "will naturally influence our relations with the countries of this hemisphere and throughout the world."

The "American Convention on Human Rights," which Carter endorsed yesterday, was negotiated in 1969, but has been ratified only by Colombia and Costa Rica. The United States was previously cool to the treaty, which includes 25 articles of individual freedoms including the "right to life," which begins "in general, from the moment of conception."

Administration officials said the "right to life" section and some others would not apply here because of U.S. "reservations" rejecting those clauses. Carter previously committed himself to seek Senate ratification of U.N. treaties on economic, social and cultural rights, and on civil and political rights. These are also being studied for "reservations."

In another policy reversal announced to the OAS, Carter said the United States will sign and he will seek Senate ratification of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, creating a nuclear-free zone in Latin America.

The practical effect would be to prohibit U.S. deployment or storage of nuclear weapons in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Panama Canal Zone or Guantanamo Naval Base. Officials said transit or overflight of nuclear weapons would not be affected, however.

Carter's decision to approve the two treaties brought the only applause during his address. He received a standing ovation at the end, but without notable enthusiasm.

Many of the governments represented at the OAS are unhappy with Carter's emphasis on civil liberties, and five of them have renounced U.S. military aid on grounds that Carter's policy interferes in their internal affairs.

On Wednesday the OAS Permanent Council—the group to which Carter made his speech—voted 17 to 5 against placing human rights problems in Uruguay and Paraguay on the agenda for a future OAS General Assembly meeting.

Unlike the Latin American policy declarations of some recent Presidents, Carter's speech was devoid of rhetorical flourishes, slogans or bold new programs. Aside from his continued emphasis on human rights and his approval of the two treaties, he broke little new ground in the policy positions and generalities he recited.

An administration official who briefed reporters after the speech conceded that Carter's enunciation of global economic policy affecting less-developed nations in Latin America and elsewhere was similar to statements last year by then-Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger.

The official maintained that the crucial difference is that "there was no commitment, no follow-up at all" on Kissinger's pronouncements of assistance to poorer lands through spe-

cial trade relationships and commodity stabilization programs.

Carter reaffirmed his commitment to negotiating a new canal treaty with Panama "in as timely a fashion as possible." Early hopes of a completed treaty by this June have dimmed due to disagreements at negotiating sessions between the United States and Panama in February and the fact that further talks have not been scheduled.

Carter said his objective is "a new treaty which will take into account Panama's legitimate needs as a sovereign nation and our interests in the efficient operation of a neutral canal, open on a non-discriminatory basis to all users."

In respect to Cuba, long a focus of OAS action and debate, Carter said the United States is seeking to determine whether relations can be improved "on a measured and reciprocal basis."

Cuba's termination of the 1973 U.S.-Cuban anti-hijacking agreement is scheduled to take effect at midnight Friday.

UPI quoted diplomatic sources in

Havana yesterday as saying that Cuba is prepared to give assurances that it will maintain the terms of the treaty and be ready for future negotiations on reinstating it formally. No public announcement has been made.

Saying that a single U.S. policy toward Latin America and the Caribbean makes little sense, Carter backed "a wider and more flexible approach, worked out in consultation with you." He pledged that, with high regard for national sovereignty, the United States "will not act abroad in ways that we would not tolerate at home," an apparent reference to assassination attempts and other covert CIA operations in the past.

Carter began his address with two long sentences in Spanish, and said that he is trying to keep up the Spanish he learned in school. He drew a hearty laugh by declaring—in his Georgia-accented Spanish—that he would make the rest of the speech in English "in the interest of good relations."